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FROM LEO XIII TO BENEDICT XV

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I. THE CENTRALIZATION OF POWER

The importance of Pius X's pontificate lies neither in his struggle against Modernism nor in his attempt at a religious revival of the Catholic spirit. In dealing with the contemporary popes we are very likely to forget that in the history of the papacy the institution has shown itself far greater than the men. Whatever the intentions and the immediate goal of the activity of a pope, his importance historically depends on this only in part, since the value of a pontificate must be judged from the higher standpoint of historical continuity in the realization of the purpose of the church.

The intentions and the personal program of a pope may be in real antithesis to the natural course of the events in the life of the church, and then the importance and the historical value of such a pope cannot actually be found in what he deemed the most important part of his activity, but exactly in what seemed to him only secondary and less valuable. This criterion, however, can hardly be applied to the history of a contemporary pope, because we are inclined to judge the institutions through the personalities rather than the personalities through the institutions.

The pontificate of Pius X offers a good illustration of these cases of historical misrepresentation. It was boasted at the very beginning of his pontificate that Pius X was to be a religious rather than a political pope; he himself announced that this was exactly his ideal; he outlined a program with such a basis; he worked sincerely with such a purpose.¹ And we believed in him; we came to discuss

¹ "With the help of God, putting our hand to work in the administration of the Church, we declare that this will be our sole purpose, namely, that *Christ is to be in everything and for everyone*. Certainly there will be some people who, measuring things divine by human standards, will endeavor to distort our intentions and turn them to earthly uses and to the interests of parties. To destroy this hope at once

the acts of his pontificate from this point of view, and we wrote the new chapter in the history of the Roman church under the title "The Religious Pontificate of Pius X." And yet this is perfect nonsense; under the spell of personality we forgot the institution, and we failed to realize that in the last analysis the pontificate of Pius X was neither more religious nor less political than the pontificate of Leo XIII.

The starting-point of the history of the modern Catholic church is the Vatican Council and its definition of the infallibility of the pope. It was the culminating point toward which converged the whole development of the historical papacy for many centuries; but to us it became a starting-point and the new factor which was bound to shape the new profile of the church. In the past it was a goal; now it is the cornerstone, the new historical and juridical ground on which the life of the church must logically be built up in the future.

We cannot fail to recognize that the admirable organization of the Roman church develops within itself, almost instinctively and in due time, the necessary means to face a new situation. The dogma of infallibility proclaimed on the very eve of the fall of the temporal power of the pope was a great achievement. Those theologians of the Council who, hostile to the dogma, had predicted the ruin of the church as a consequence of it were wrong, and the Curia Romana, which insisted energetically on having it, was right. The church, deprived of its temporal support, had to face the problem of a new internal reconstruction. Such a task required a revival of the principle of authority and the steady, solid basis which only the dogma of infallibility could furnish.

But this theory of the nature of the church, which found its higher manifestation in the doctrine of the infallibility, implies in practice a whole system of strongly centralized government. An infallible pope in the doctrinal realm means in practice a theocratic

we strongly affirm that we are, and with God's help we will be, nothing else but *ministers of God*, whose authority we represent. God's cause is our cause; to it we have decided to dedicate all our strength and our very life. Therefore if a motto is asked of us which shall make clear our intentions we will always give: *Instaurare omnia in Christo*."—First *Encyclical* of Pius X, October, 1903.

power beyond the control of either personal or collective authority.¹ Furthermore, a centralized government, to be efficient, requires fundamental unity of method, and unity of method calls for unity of mentality. The mental unification of the Catholic clergy, through common methods of education and common philosophical doctrines, was the great task of the pontificate of Leo XIII. All his vaunted political activity, all his dreams of a new temporal kingdom, all that in his judgment was preparation for a high place in the history of the papacy, was but useless dispersion of energies, even a dangerous adventure in the light of the real interests of the Roman policy. This part of his personal program was destined to failure because it was not in accord with the natural and logical development of the life of the church. But what he accomplished toward the unification of the clergy and the organization of the Catholic laymen was the most effective, although the least apparent, achievement of his pontificate.²

On the contrary, Pius X, who desired a religious pontificate, was constrained by the events of his reign to spend most of his energies in political struggles, all of which ended in defeat. And yet these defeats helped him to continue the unifying work of his predecessor. Only through the failure of his French policy could Pius destroy forever the last remnants of the old liberties of the Gallican church; and through a series of apparent failures and blunders in his admin-

¹ Catholic theology limits the concept of infallibility exclusively to the definitions *ex cathedra*. There is no doubt about the doctrine; but the pope practically claims the right to interfere with social, political, and national matters of the believers and does ask full obedience in these matters as well as in question of faith. Pope Pius X, in his address to the French pilgrims, April, 1909, said: "Those who are rebels to the authority of the Church, assuming that the Church invades the dominion of the State, they impose limits to the truth." And Benedict XV in his first *Encyclical* says: "No private person, either in books or in daily papers, or in public speeches, has a right to act as a teacher in the Church. It is well known by all who is the *One* to whom God confided the magistracy of the Church: let then the field be free for him, so that he may speak when and how he thinks suitable to speak. It is the duty of all to listen to him with obsequious devotion and to obey his words" (November 1, 1914).

² On the activity of Pope Leo XIII toward the unification of the clergy through a common system of education, and of the Catholic laity through the organization of a Catholic political party, see the article "A Review of Italian Modernism," *Harvard Theological Review*, October, 1914.

istration he succeeded in preserving the unity of the clergy by eliminating all dissidents; in starting the codification of the Canon Law, in attempting a reform of the Roman congregations, and, above all, in curtailing the authority of the bishops to the advantage of the Curia.¹

This last feature of the pontificate of Pius X has passed almost unnoticed by the historians of the contemporary Roman church; and yet it is perhaps one of the achievements which will have remarkable consequences in the history of the papacy.

During the old régime, about a century ago, the bishops were still the henchmen of kings and of governments; they were scarcely representatives of their churches. The handling of a diocese in many European countries was in some respects a political rather than a religious function. In the last analysis the famous alliance of the throne and the altar had ceased to be on equal footing—at the expense of the altar. The gradual breakdown of all the temporal ties binding the church to the peculiar interest of international policy paved the way for a transformation.

With the new régime, and especially during the pontificate of Leo XIII, the bishops became the henchmen of the pope. In this change they did not gain anything in autonomy; perhaps they lost something, but doubtless they gained very much in self-respect and public esteem; for between the two masters, the king and the pope, the latter was at least the legitimate one. Evidently the one who made the greatest gain was the pope himself. But Leo XIII was a great diplomat; in his personal dealings with bishops and prelates he was tactful; and the charm and the majesty of his manners, the authority of his words, were so imposing to all his visitors that the Catholic bishops felt rather fortunate in having such a master. It is true that they did not enjoy great liberty in the administration of their dioceses, but at least no attempt was made against their prerogatives of honor, and the traditional

¹ The true history of the breach between the Roman Curia and French Republic has not yet been written. From the French side the best book is still *La politique religieuse de la République Française*, by Andrieu Mater (Paris, 1909). From the side of the Curia there are a number of articles and pamphlets, but the most interesting is the simple *White Book* published by the Vatican.

forms of respect were carefully observed by Rome in dealing with them.¹

The coming of Pius X with his ideas of reformation swept away even those last remnants of episcopal grandeur. Simple priests and friars who enjoyed the confidence of the pope were sent to the various dioceses, with the title and the prerogatives of "Apostolic Visitors," to make careful inspections of the episcopal administration. Old bishops and archbishops who during the pontificate of Leo XIII had been highly praised, and even some cardinals, were obliged to bow before these parvenus, and to allow them to scrutinize everything at their leisure, even private and personal affairs. As a consequence of these inspections some bishops were obliged to resign, others to receive coadjutors; all of them were deeply humiliated and terrorized. From that time the bishops became the henchmen of the Curia, and unfortunately enough the Curia at that moment was impersonated by a few anachronistic survivals of the Spanish Inquisition.²

The same spirit and tendencies led the pope and his advisers to the refusal of the French law concerning church organization, although the bishops of that country had voted for its acceptance. It was a terrible blow, for the French church was reduced at once to mendicity, losing even the property of the sacred edifices themselves. But such a loss was of no importance to the pope in comparison with the advantage of having at least the French episcopacy at the mercy of the Curia without further interference either by the government or by laical corporations. The history of the French Catholic church is for centuries the history of the quarrels between the national governments and the papacy for the

¹ During the pontificate of Leo XIII the cardinals with dioceses enjoyed a great authority in the appointments of the new bishops of their provinces and near-by churches; they were regularly consulted and invited to present some candidate of their own choice. With Pius X frequently they were not even consulted! In a Sicilian diocese a bishop with power to ordain priests of the Greek rite was appointed and ordained without any knowledge of the archbishop of the same diocese where the new bishop was supposed to exercise his power.

² In Sicily alone, after these "apostolic visits," three bishops were requested to resign. An archbishop was put under secret trial at Rome, another one severely reprimanded.

control of the episcopacy, and through the episcopacy of the church itself. The papacy could not forget all the troubles and the humiliations that those quarrels had brought to the Vatican, and the opportunity was too unique to be passed by. After all, the heavy price was to be paid by the French church itself, and that might well be considered an expiation for the sins of the old Gallican church against Rome.

Several attempts were made to terrorize the German bishops, but because of their political connections with the German government and with the powerful Catholic party of the Reichstag, these attempts failed, not, however, so completely but that the German bishops were deeply impressed.¹

The American church, considered until a short time ago a missionary church, had enjoyed special privileges and a kind of autonomy in its internal organization. A series of papal ordinances and decrees gradually brought the American church under the common law, and the observance of the Council of Trent was made obligatory for this country.²

In this way, with the traditional perseverance of the Roman Curia in seizing all opportunities, the papacy during this last period of its history has accomplished one of the greatest tasks and realized one of the principal ideals of the Roman policy: a real and efficient concentration of all the ecclesiastical powers in the hands of the Curia. This work must be continued, completed, and preserved

¹ The attacks against German bishops were made rather indirectly and especially through the famous *Corrispondenza Romana*, a periodical edited by Mgr. Umberto Benigni, at that time substitute secretary in foreign affairs department of the Vatican. The *affaire* of the petition made by a great number of German Catholic scholars and priests for the abolition of the *Index Librorum prohibitorum* was one of the most striking incidents of that period. But German bishops presented their remonstrances to the pope in such a way that Pius X was deeply impressed, and to give them satisfaction sent away Benigni from the political office of the Vatican, appointing him professor of church history at the Pontifical Academy of the "Nobili Ecclesiastici," the pontifical school of diplomacy. Important articles on German troubles may be found in the *Revue Moderniste*, published in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1911 and 1912.

² The Catholic American church was organized as a missionary church under the jurisdiction of the Congregation of *Propaganda Fide*. Now, according to the reform of Pius X, the authority of the *Propaganda* over the churches of the United States is abolished, and these churches are supposed to live in conformity to the common rules of Canon Law.

in the future; whatever the names and the personal programs of the popes may be, they will follow the same policy. The difference will be in words and tactics only, but the goal will be the same, and the most important instrument of action will be substantially identical throughout.

II. THE REACTION

Naturally enough this program of the papacy found strong opposition and resistance within the church itself. What else, in the last analysis, was Modernism but a centrifugal tendency, an attempt to break the iron circle which was becoming narrower day by day and threatening the very existence of the individual spiritual life under the all-absorbing tentacles of an absolute theocratic principle of authority?

The last year of the pontificate of Pius X witnessed the most striking episode of this struggle between the harassing Curia and the institutions of the church which resisted it. The system of denunciations had reached its climax, and the persecution of Modernism had already degenerated into general persecution against everybody who was suspected of thinking in a different way from the Curia. The hunting of heresies had become a fruitful and delightful occupation of many zealots, and heretics were easily found everywhere. Books written by Catholic scholars, which for many years had been allowed to circulate freely among the clergy, indeed had been considered genuine products of orthodox Catholic science, were at once denounced as containing doctrines which were poison for Catholic minds. The *Index* was decorated with lists of names, some of which had merited years before the felicitation of the pope himself, with the title "pillars of Catholic science and Catholic faith."¹ Dissatisfaction and fear invaded all spheres of Catholicism, ecclesiastical as well as laical, but nobody dared to manifest the deep affliction of sincere souls.

¹ A striking instance of this recrudescence of the *Index* was the condemnation of the well-known book *L'histoire ancienne de l'Eglise* by Mgr. L. Duchesne. That history had circulated among Catholic students in lithographed copies since 1876, was corrected and amplified by the author in 1906, and published in France. The attacks were started by a series of articles by the Jesuit review *La Civiltà Cattolica* (Rome) when an Italian translation of the book began to appear, and it was put in the *Index* in 1912.

An opportunity was offered by an incident that at first seemed to be of no interest. In Germany first, and afterward in France and in Italy, the Catholic organizations of workmen, after various experiences, came to the decision to accept the Christian syndicates which had been started by the workmen themselves with a strictly economic purpose, and which were independent both of the Catholic political organization and of the control of the Catholic clergy.¹ But the conservative party among the Catholics, deemed these free syndicates to be dangerous for the church and to oppose the very spirit of Catholic doctrine and traditions. Catholicism is an integral system of doctrine and practice; there is no possibility in Catholic life for a separation of the economic problem from its political and religious connections. In such a system nothing can be left out, nothing can be added which does not conform to the tradition, without imperiling the very essence of Catholicism itself. Holding this principle, the conservatives took for themselves the title of Integralists, in opposition to the Syndicalists.

But the Syndicalists were numerous and well organized. In Italy they had the control of several Catholic banks, and economic institutions and many bishops and cardinals sympathized with them openly. Even the Italian government did not look with disfavor on their organization.

In France many Catholics known as leaders in social and political activities were Syndicalists. In Germany—the cradle of Christian Syndicalism—they were supported by the imperial government, which found in their organization a useful force against revolutionary socialism.

The Integralists were in the minority, but they had with them the Vatican and the pope himself. To support their claims they developed an Integralist theory as an essential part of the Catholic doctrine. Integral Catholicism does not admit compromises of any sort with opposite parties and bases its program of action on the assumption that the authority of the pope, true vicar of God on

¹ On Christian Syndicalism the best study is *Le Syndicalisme chrétien en Allemagne*, by Maurice Kellershohn, avocat à la Cour d'Appel de Bordeaux (Paris: Bloud, 1912). An account of the last events of Christian Syndicalism before the death of Pius X is to be found in "Vitalità e vita nel Cattolicesimo-Cronache" by E. Rutili, in *Bilychnis*, December, 1914 (Rome

earth, is not to be restricted in practice to the religious field, but, on the contrary, is to be recognized the supreme authority in political and social matters as well. Every good Catholic is obliged, under penalty of sin, to follow the pontifical directions in every sense, unconditionally and without reserve. Furthermore, much stress was laid upon the absolute necessity of the temporal power of the papacy and upon the moral duty of the Catholics of the world to work for its restoration. Amazing and exaggerated as these doctrines may seem, they are none the less logically deduced from the inflexible Catholic system, and they represent the genuine thought of the Vatican circles.¹

The antagonism between Integralism and Syndicalism, which at the beginning seemed confined to a mere question of detail, assumed wider proportions as a consequence of a remarkable incident that happened in Austria. At the Catholic Congress of Linz, July, 1913, the editor of an Integralist paper and president of a juvenile association, proposed a vote in favor of the re-establishment of the temporal kingdom of the pope. The chairman of the meeting, following the instruction of the Archbishop of Vienna, refused to discuss the matter or even to consider the proposition of the violent Integralist leader. The result was a vehement campaign of the *Sonntagsblatt*, the Integralist paper, against the Archbishop of Vienna. The local quarrel spread to other countries; other bishops were denounced as holding liberal tendencies, and a general conflagration started within the church. Laymen without commission, obscure friars from provincial convents, all animated with the best Integralist zeal, arose to call bishops and prelates before their tribunal, accusing them of treachery and felony toward the Church of Rome. And Rome kept silent.

¹ Pope Pius X, in his address to the new appointed cardinals, May 27, 1914, said: "When you go back to your dioceses, if you meet people who boast their faith and their devotion to the Pope, and who call themselves Catholics, but who would consider it an insult to be called 'Clericals,' tell them, in the most solemn way, that devout sons of the Pope are only those who obey his words and follow him in everything, and not the others who try to elude his orders with stubbornness worthy of a better cause, in order to obtain exemptions and dispensations which are as painful to us as they are dangerous and scandalous to the Church." Notice that the name of "Clericals" is given in Italy and France to those who follow the political directions of the pope, especially regarding the aspirations toward the re-establishment of the temporal kingdom.

But at this point something happened that was almost unprecedented in the history of the Roman church. In a meeting of the Pius-Verein, the most important Catholic association of Austria, the Jesuit Fr. Kolb made a strong attack on Integralism, branding as infamous the campaign against the bishops, and concluding that the Integralists were not even to be considered Christians. Almost at the same time the famous review of the Italian Jesuits, *La Civiltà Cattolica* of Rome, published a series of articles in which, commenting on the proceedings of the Catholic Congress of Münster, it approved the Syndicalist unions and outlined a broad program for Catholic social work. In Germany the Jesuit review *Stimmen aus Maria Laach* published a striking appeal for unity against the menace of Integralism, signed by all the members of the editorial staff. It was evident that the Society of Jesus did not share the views of the pope and had taken its place of combat with the opposition. It was amazing.

The Jesuits had supported Pius X with all their strength in his struggle against Modernism, in his attempt at a reformation of the ecclesiastic discipline, even in the odious work of hunting heresies and heretics. Why did they change their attitude? It is not difficult to solve the mystery. They had come to realize that the pope had fallen completely under the control of a few narrow-minded and ignorant men of his environment, and now they were afraid that the reign of terror would disorganize the church and the anti-episcopal movement would pave the way for a possible schism. Evidently in their judgment Pius X had reached the summit of his reactionary policy, and now a decline was to come. The constructive period of his pontificate was past; now it was necessary to prevent him from destroying through his own excesses what he had previously done for the church. The pontificate of Pius X was virtually past and the Jesuits wisely began to prepare the way for the pontificate to come.

It seems that Pius X was deeply affected by the new attitude of the Jesuits; the chief editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica* was asked to resign, and the place was filled with the most conservative of the Italian Jesuits, a personal friend of the pope.¹ But a renewal of

¹ The appointment of the editor of the *Civiltà Cattolica* is the exclusive prerogative of the pope. The editor who was asked to resign was Fr. Brandi, and the newly

the fight came from France. The Jesuit review *Les Etudes*, in an article of January, 1914, under the title "Critiques negatives et tâches nécessaires," gave an appalling picture of the dangers of Integralism, and especially of the frightful consequences of disparaging the episcopal authority and of terrorizing the clergy with the system of suspicions and denunciations. The Integralists, on the other hand, conscious of the support of the pope, were not discouraged and accepted the challenge of the powerful society. "We do not care," wrote the *Unità Cattolica*, an Italian Integralist paper, "what the Jesuits think about Integralism: the Jesuits after all are not the Church" (January 29, 1914). At this point the debate degenerated in many cases into personal quarrels, and both sides indulged largely in daily insults and recriminations. The confusion was at its height.

Then the pope, who had not made any official statement, but had manifested his Integralist sympathies only in private and personal utterances, judged it opportune to intervene and stop the quarrels with the authority of his official words. In the consistory of May 24, addressing the new cardinals, Pius X complained in a rather pathetic way of the conduct of Syndicalists, who had failed to understand his wishes and to follow his directions. "Among so many perils," said the pope, "I did not fail to use my voice in order to recall the errants, to admonish about the dangers, and to trace the road that ought to be followed by all the Catholics. But my words, though so clear and precise, were neither always, nor by all, heard, and were frequently misunderstood." As for the Syndicalist unions, the pope said that they were to be permitted only in exceptional circumstances, but that he personally would prefer and favor the Catholic denominational unions with complete exclusion of heterogeneous elements.

The intervention of the pope did not bring peace; there was still room for difference of interpretation of his words, and the

appointed was Fr. Chiaudiano, both of them now dead. Fr. Brandi, whose death was announced a few months ago, was for a long time connected with the Catholic Church of America. He lived in this country for almost thirty years, teaching in several Catholic colleges of the Jesuits. By Leo XIII he was appointed a member of the commission to examine the question of the validity of Anglican orders, and he wrote on that topic an extensive memorandum which decided the commission to give a negative answer to the question. Fr. Brandi's death passed almost unnoticed by American Catholic papers.

quarrels grew more bitter. The pope realized then that he was not obeyed and understood that he had been left alone in a frightful solitude. But he believed in his divine mission, and overcoming the last hesitation, with a decree published July 15, 1914, he formally condemned the Syndicalist unions. It was his last condemnation; a month later the great European war began and the heart of the old pope was broken.

III. BENEDICT XV

The election of Cardinal Della Chiesa was unexpected in so far as it concerned him personally, but its significance was anticipated. Benedict XV is the first pope educated in an Italian Royal University under the new régime. Leo XIII was a pupil of the Jesuits; Pius X was a student of a small provincial clerical seminary. Pope Benedict studied in the Italian public schools and was graduated as Doctor in Law from the Royal University of Genoa in 1875. Afterward he embraced the clerical career and was initiated by Rampolla into the pontifical diplomacy. When Rampolla left his office, Della Chiesa kept his place as vice-secretary of state for two years, until he was appointed archbishop of Bologna. During the seven years of his episcopal career he experienced personally all the humiliating conditions imposed upon the bishops by the policy of Pius X, and he realized also all the dangers of Integralism.

Following the impulse of a sincere reaction, Benedict XV in his first *Encyclical* condemned the flippancy of the Integralist papers and recommended to all Catholics obedience toward the bishops, whose authority, he says, "is of divine origin." The Catholic theologians, who have discussed for centuries whether the episcopal authority is of divine or ecclesiastical institution, have now a new text to quote, but not being a definition *ex cathedra*, it will not solve the question. The Catholic Syndicalist papers which had been barred from all clerical institutions by a circular letter of Merry del Val, the secretary of state of the late pope, now received words of encouragement and praise. The pious Society of St. Jerome for the Diffusion of the Gospel, which had been practically dissolved by Pius X and had seen two of its most remarkable pub-

lications catalogued in the *Index*, was reorganized and highly recommended by the Pope in a public letter.¹ The nightmare of the black reaction was past; the church breathed again with a sense of relief. Cardinal Mercier expressed his satisfaction in his Lenten Pastoral. He says:

It was not enough for those self-appointed knights of orthodoxy to profess one's self a faithful Catholic; in order more religiously to obey the pope they pretended it to be necessary to challenge the authority of the bishops. Journalists without commission dared to excommunicate those who refused to pass under the Caudine Forks of their Integralism. Fear had invaded every religious soul, and honest consciences were suffering, but they could not speak.

Having thus reproved the methods of Pius X and reassured scandalized Catholic consciences, Benedict XV formulated his own program of work, from which it appears that a change of methods does not mean a change of purpose. Catholics are urged to obey without discussion, and triumph is promised only to the obedient: "Vir obediens loquitur victoriam." With respect to Modernism, Benedict XV confirmed without discrimination the anathemas of Pius X: "Nihil innovetur quod traditum est."

Confronted with the difficult task of keeping the Holy See within the narrow limits of neutrality in the present war, Benedict XV is displaying remarkable qualities of prudence and diplomacy. The problem which confronts the Vatican in connection with the European war is twofold, religious and political. There are on both sides of the warring people Catholic soldiers dying in the trenches, Catholic families suffering at home, and each side has its Catholic hierarchy. Both sides assume that they were obliged to take arms for self-defense and to fight for justice and liberty;

¹ Letter of Benedict XV to Cardinal Cassetta, president of St. Jerome's Society for the Diffusion of the Gospel: "We rejoice at your zeal in spreading the book of the gospel, not only in a great number of copies, but also in a more accurate edition. We desire most earnestly and we hope fervently that you may receive from your admirable zeal not only this result, namely, a very wide diffusion of the book of the gospel, but that you may furthermore obtain another advantage, which would realize one of our ideals, that is to say, that the holy word may enter the bosom of every Catholic family and be there like the drachma of the gospel, which all seek diligently and jealously to guard, so that the faithful may accustom themselves to read and to comment upon it every day, thus learning to live a holy life in conformity with the divine will" (November 6, 1914).

all of them, priests and bishops at their head, invoke God with the same words of the Catholic liturgy; all of them ask for the blessing of Rome. Even if the pope had had in his hands all the necessary elements to judge the right and the wrong of the case, it would have been a dangerous undertaking to side with one of the parties. From a political point of view the best thing to do was to remain silent as Benedict did.¹ But silence itself was not without danger.

Much has been written about the moral bankruptcy of the papacy because of the pope's failure to protest against the invasion of Belgium. It was assumed that Leo XIII and even Pius X would have followed a different line of conduct if such an event had taken place under their pontificates. It is very likely that Leo XIII, with his love of dramatic deeds and his well-known Francophile tendencies, and Pius X, with his impulsive character, would have protested against Germany, thereby creating a very difficult situation for the Catholics of the central empires. But Benedict XV does not pretend to be a political genius like Leo XIII; far less is he a man of impulsive character like Pius X. The danger of a new schism in the German church was not entirely unreal; it is not to be forgotten that Modernism had found in Germany a very large assent and that the "Los von Rom" movement is in Austria stronger than ever.

On the other hand, the French bishops who by the anticlerical persecutions of the past years had been put in open opposition to the government of their own country, and who by the policy of Pius X had been made completely subservient to the will of Rome, now in the supreme danger of their fatherland found again those national feelings and that unity of interests with their country which had been weakened, if not destroyed, in their consciences. Among the European clergy as well as among the people national

¹ In his address to the cardinals in the consistory of January 22, 1915, Pope Benedict condemned with general words all the wrongs of the war, but he was very careful in avoiding discrimination between the two parties. "To proclaim," he said, "that nobody is allowed on any account to act against justice is undoubtedly a special duty of the Roman Pontiff, who by God is constituted supreme interpreter and vindicator of the eternal law, and we frankly proclaim it, greatly reproving all injustice on whatever side it may have been committed. But to involve the pontifical authority in the quarrels of belligerent nations would be *neither suitable nor useful*" (*neque conveniens foret nec utile*).

passions and racial hatred have for the time being effaced the feeling of Christian brotherhood. When the pope sent to the bishops of the warring nations his prayer for peace, all of them delivered it from their episcopal thrones, but with a comment which was neither in the words nor in the intention of the pope. "We pray for peace," they said, "but peace with victory and after victory, not for peace at any cost."¹

In these last months we have seen French and Belgian bishops commenting angrily upon words and deeds of their German colleagues, and Cardinal Mercier criticizing bitterly Cardinal Hartmann, of Cologne, and Cardinal Hartmann protesting against Cardinal Mercier.² The pope's secret intervention compelled both sides to silence, but Benedict could not fail to realize that the Vatican policy of centralization of power is receiving a terrible blow, and that the spirit of Catholic Romanism as against the spirit of nationalism may be almost lost in this tremendous outburst of racial hatred. Even the Italian bishops, who a short time ago considered it their duty to despise the authority of the Italian

¹ Cardinal Amette, Archbishop of Paris, thus commented on the appeal of the pope for peace before reading the pontifical prayer from the pulpit of Notre Dame: "The Sovereign Pontiff reproaches all injustice and violation of rights: that is to say, that the re-establishment of those rights will be the prime condition of peace. Who then violated all rights? Who invaded innocent and peaceful Belgium? Who then attacked our beautiful France, which did not desire war? Who multiplied beyond what was necessary the outrages committed in the invaded territories? Who then tortured women, children, and priests? Who then destroyed our cathedrals? The Pope knows all these things, and God knows them also. The peace which the Pope desires will not be confirmed until all these acts of injustice shall have been made good. And that can only be through the victory of our arms and of our allies."

The same day Cardinal Hartmann, of Cologne, commented on the same papal document in this way: "We have confidence in our just cause, in our brave troops, and in our noble emperor, who unites in his person all the virtues of his ancestors of the Hohenzollern family, but first of all we trust in God, Lord of battles, to whom we pray faithfully and earnestly." (*Lokal Anzeiger*, February 8, 1915.)

² See *La guerre Allemande et le catholicisme*, published by a committee of French Catholics, and the German reply, *Der Deutsche Krieg und der Katholizismus. Deutsche Abwehr französischer Angriffe*. Of a special interest is the *Letter of the Bishops of Belgium to the Bishops of Germany, Bavaria, and Austria-Hungary* of November 24, 1915. See also *Catholic Monthly Letter*, published by the committee for the defense of German Catholic interests during the war; responsible editor, Dr. E. Krebs, professor at the University of Freiburg, i. B.; also the book, *Die Kirche nach dem Kriege*, by M. Rade (Tübingen, 1913).

government, calling it "the government of the revolution," and applying to themselves the famous words of the Vatican: *Sub hostili dominatione constituti*, even they experienced the awakening of national feeling in their souls, and many of them manifested these feelings in such a noisy way that the Vatican recommended moderation of their enthusiasm.¹

This new attitude and these new conditions of the Catholic mind and conscience, throughout Catholic Europe, have created a very difficult and dangerous situation for the Vatican religious policy. The prudent but not inactive silence of Benedict XV may be acknowledged frankly—in so far as we are allowed to judge at this time—as the best way of dealing with such a complicated and delicate situation.

But there were other reasons which may have led Benedict XV to this policy. This is only the third pontificate since the fall of the temporal power, and the prospect of its possible restoration is still alive in Vatican circles. Certainly the pope himself is fully convinced that a return to the conditions of fifty years ago is practically impossible; but he may cherish the hope of other valuable compensations in order to settle the Roman question. A skilled politician like Benedict XV could not fail to understand that this war was offering him an extraordinary opportunity for attempting a solution of the question.² Moreover, it was clear enough that

¹ See the editorial articles in the *Osservatore Romano*, the official organ of the Vatican (October 8, 1914), and in the *Unità Cattolica* (March 26, 1915).

² In his first *Encyclical* Benedict XV expressed his desire that the coming peace should bring back to the pope his old temporal power. "With fervid and insistent prayers," he says, "we invoke the end of the present most disastrous war, for the good of human society, as well as for the Church. For the good of society, in order that when peace shall have been obtained, it may go forward in every branch of progress; for the good of the Church of Jesus Christ, in order that, freed of any further impediment, it may continue to carry comfort and salvation to the utmost parts of the world. It is only too true that the Church has for a long time not enjoyed the liberty which it needs, that is to say, since its head the Supreme Pontiff lost that support which, by the divine decree of Providence, it had obtained in the course of centuries as guardian of its liberties. Therefore, to the desire of an early peace among the nations we add the desire that the abnormal condition in which the head of the Church finds itself should cease." The importance of this pontifical document, and the danger for Italy suggested by its words, were pointed out in a remarkable article by G. Amendola,

the pope could expect nothing in this direction from the allies. Neither schismatic Russia, nor Protestant England, nor anti-clerical France, in case of their victory, would think of helping the papacy in its claims against Italy, whereas much might possibly come from the central empires. The original plan of the Vatican was simple and logical. A victorious Germany and a neutral Italy were the assumptions. Catholic Austria and the half-Catholic Germany, when in condition to dictate terms to Europe, both to satisfy the demand of their Catholic people and to punish Italy for its neutrality, would propose to the peace congress the settlement of the Roman question at the expense of Italy. On the other side, the allies, in order to have something more to concede without further sacrifice of their own, would be glad to accept the proposition. Italy, alone in its ill-fated neutrality, would be obliged to bow before the will of all the world and to go to a new Canossa at the mercy of the Vatican.

To protest against the invasion of Belgium would have been to destroy from the very beginning all this plan of pontifical restoration, and such a blunder was not to be expected of the cold, reflective mind of Benedict XV. Thus while the words of the pope and the official communications of the secretary of state proclaimed absolute neutrality, the Italian Catholic papers, inspired by the Vatican, did not conceal their sympathy for the German cause and their hopes for a German victory. "The victory of the allies will be the victory of freemasonry in Western Europe and the victory of the Holy Synod in the East; both will jeopardize the very existence of the Roman Catholic Church." This was the *leit-motif*

"La portata politica del documento pontificio," published in the most authoritative Italian liberal-conservative paper, *Il Corriere della Sera* (November 17, 1914). "In this crucial moment," Amendola says, "the Pope protests against Italy and expresses his hope that the coming peace, while bringing inestimable advantages to all mankind, shall give back to the Church the old temporal kingdom. . . . Undoubtedly this pontifical document has great importance and deserves consideration, not only in regard to the problems of the church itself, but also in regard to the direction which Italian policy is to take under the present circumstances. If the Holy See does not forget, Italy too cannot and, above all, must not forget." On relations between Italy and the Vatican before Italy's entrance into the war, see the very useful little book *Il Papa l'Italia e la Guerra*, by Guglielmo Quadrotta-Milano (1915).

of articles and pamphlets and speeches authorized by the Vatican¹ and supported by the finances of the German propaganda.

The participation of Italy in the war on the side of the allies was a severe blow to all these dreams of the Vatican policy. It would not be correct to say that the Italian government broke its neutrality simply to demolish the Vatican plan of action, but it would be also untrue to say that this thought was without influence in Italy's decision for war. The pope did what he could to avoid the Italian adventure; his directions to the Catholics were clear enough, his attempt to create complications in raising the question of the ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, his bitter words when the attempt failed and war was decided, manifest how deeply he was impressed by the ruin of his cherished hopes.

His failure was due to the Italian Catholics who did not understand, or, if they understood, did not follow, his wishes; siding with the war party, they showed clearly that they will never consent to the re-establishment of the temporal papacy at the cost of a national humiliation and of new internal divisions. It was the first time since the fall of the temporal kingdom that the Vatican tested in a real and vital circumstance the efficiency of its power over the Italian Catholics, and it was a failure which undoubtedly will affect deeply all the Vatican policy in the near future and will suggest to the pope new lines of conduct and new plans of action.

¹ Letter of Cardinal Gasparri, secretary of state, to Cardinal Sevin, of Lyon: "The Holy See gave peremptory orders to the Catholic press in Italy to keep neutrality" (*Corriere d'Italia*, December 20, 1914). Count Della Torre, president of the central board of the Catholic associations in Italy, in his address—authorized by the pope—to the Circolo di San Pietro, in Rome, February 5, 1915, announced again that neutrality was the duty of Italian Catholics. The same idea was expounded in several articles and speeches by Meda, who afterward became a strong supporter of the war party, and is now secretary of state for the treasury in the present Italian coalition cabinet. See especially his letter to *L'Idea Nazionale*, December 11, 1914.